

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 AID-05 /076 W
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R 190804Z NOV 77
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5264
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 2032

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PROP, XF, IZ
SUBJECT: COMMENT ON IRAQI REACTION TO SADAT INITIATIVE

REF: BAGHDADD 2022

1. PUBLIC BLASTS AGAINST SADAT'S INITIATIVE, AS
REPORTED REFTEL, APPEAR TO BE COORDINATED RESTATEMENT
OF REJECTIONIST STANCE AT TIME WHEN SETTLEMENT EFFORTS
ARE SHOWING NEW LIFE. THIS IS ALSO FIRST TEST OF ROLE
THE REVAMPED NATIONAL COMMAND (NC) WILL PLAY IN
ARTICULATION OF IRAQI FOREIGN POLICY, SINCE NOW THAT
REGIME IS IN FIRMER CONTROL OF NC, ANNOUNCEMENTS IT
MAKES WHICH MIGHT EMBARRAS THE IRAQI STATE CAN NO
LONGER BE DISOWNED. INDEED, THE NATIONAL COMMAND STATE-
MENT AND THE AL-THAWRA EDITORIALS ARE CLOSE ENOUGH IN
TONE AND SUBSTANCE TO SUGGEST A COMMON PEN DID THE DRAF-
TING. TARIQ AZIZ, AS NATIONAL COMMAND MEMBER WITH EXPLICIT
RESPONSIBILITY FOR INFORMATION AND AS EDITOR OF AL-THAWRA,
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IS THE PROBABLE AUTHOR. HIS KNOWN CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH
SADDAM HUSSEIN AND THE SUPPORTIVE STATEMENT IN TUNIS BY
FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE IRAQI
GOVERNMENT STANDS FIRMLY BEHIND THESE RENEWED ATTACKS
ON SETTLEMENT EFFORTS.

2. THE MOST TROUBLING PASSAGE IN THE NATIONAL COMMAND

STATEMENT IS THE CALL FOR THE ARAB MASSES TO RESIST
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SADAT INITIATIVE "THROUGH ALL MEANS."
ON THE FACE OF IT, THIS LOOKS LIKE AN INVITATION TO THE
EGYPTIAN PEOPLE TO RISE AGAINST SADAT AND MIGHT
ALSO BE CONSIDERED A THREAT TO SUPPORT ANTI-SETTLEMENT
TERRORISM. ARAB AMBASSADORS TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN DO
NOT APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT THE IRAQI REGIME HAS
UNDERTAKEN PLANS TO SUPPORT TERRORIST ACTS DIRECTED AT
THEIR ARAB BROTHERS, EXCEPT FOR PROBABLE CONTINUED ACTIONS
AGAINST SYRIAN OFFICIALS. NONETHELESS, IT IS LIKELY
THAT THE BAGHDAD AUTHORITIES WILL BE ALERT FOR
OPPORTUNITIES TO FOMENT OPPOSITION TO "CAPITULATIONIST
LEADERS." WE CAN ALSO EXPECT CONTINUED IRAQI SUPPORT
FOR REJECTIONIST PALESTINIAN GROUPS, ALTHOUGH BAGHDAD
MAY BE CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN THAT IT IS UNAWARE OF SPECIFIC
OPERATIONS CONTEMPLATED BY GROUPS BASED IN IRAQ.
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